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Anaheim high schools tentatively OK \$25.9 million in cuts

 By SCOTT MARTINDALE
THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

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ARTICLE

ANAHEIM – Anaheim Union High School District trustees on Thursday approved a preliminary spending plan for the 2010-11 school year that calls for \$25.9 million in budget cuts that would wipe out adult education and summer school.

The cutbacks, which also would pare counseling and library services, psychologists and custodians, were approved unanimously.



Anaheim Union High School District trustees have tentatively authorized \$25.9 million in budget cuts for the 2010-11 school year, a plan that would wipe out summer school and adult education and pare counseling and library services, among other cuts.

SCOTT MARTINDALE, THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

Proposed cuts

Of the cuts, \$12.1 million will be filled by shuffling various pots of money and with federal stimulus funds. The remaining \$13.9 million will come from cuts in 2010-11:

- \$2.2 million:** Eliminate 17 counselors
- \$1.7 million:** Eliminate 2010 summer school
- \$1.7 million:** Reduce library staff
- \$1.5 million:** Eliminate adult education
- \$1.4 million:** Reduce psychologist services
- \$1.3 million:** Reduce custodial services

"I have never lived through a recession like this," Trustee Anna Percy said. "It isn't going to get better for a long time and everyone needs to brace themselves for it. This is the most disgusting, painful thing that I think we've had to deal with."

The school district already has shed more than 245 jobs, including 152 educators, and cut \$31.3 million from its \$315 million budget for 2009-10.

The number of layoffs planned for 2010-11 hasn't been calculated yet, only the amount the district would cut from each department.

"If our counselors aren't there, who do we turn to?" senior Maira Castenada, 17, ASB president of Anaheim's Savanna High School, told trustees Thursday. "We view them as an authority figure. Our counselors – their doors are always open for us; they never turn us down with what we're going through."

Next year, Anaheim Union High is proposing to cancel all summer school class and close the district's adult education program for up to two years.

"All these students – their question is, what's going to happen to the ESL students if our school gets shut down, the current students who need to get their diploma?" adult education student Maria Lopez, 19, of Stanton told trustees Thursday. "We want you to reconsider shutting down our school."

A bleak state budget forecast could force the district to make even deeper cuts over the next few months, Superintendent Joseph Farley said, although the blow could be softened if district employees agree to take pay concessions.

Story Highlights

Anaheim Union High School District trustees have approved a tentative 2010-11 spending plan calling \$25.9 million in budget cuts.

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\$1 million: Merge two alternative education schools

\$0.3 million: Reduce secretarial services

\$2.8 million: Capture savings from lower-than-expected health insurance costs and other measures

"If the state budget worsens, we may have to do (the identified cuts) and more," Farley said.

The district has not begun negotiations with union leaders for employees' 2010-11 contract, and unlike some school districts, will not try to renegotiate employees' current 2009-10 contracts, which did not call for any pay cuts, Farley said.

At Thursday's school board meeting, union leaders expressed disappointment in the district's handling of budget cuts so far, including a plan to cut the hours of food services workers at Anaheim City School District elementary schools, which have food services provided by the high school district.

The school board approved that plan – which could go into effect in as soon as 45 days – in a 4-1 vote Thursday, with Trustee Thomas "Hoagy" Holguin dissenting.

"It's a reckless move," said Gerald Adams, president of the district's chapter of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees union representing about 540 non-classroom employees. "We're not trying to be holdouts or bankrupt the district, but we know this is not well thought out."

With the proposed budget cuts outlined so far, Anaheim Union High will be able to present a balanced interim budget plan when it is due to the county Department of Education next week.

Many other Orange County school districts are expected to file a "qualified" spending plan, meaning the district might not be able to meet its financial obligations over the next two years.

Anaheim Union High trustees approved a "positive" interim budget Thursday, indicating the

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district is confident it can maintain a balanced budget.

"Over the past couple of years, we have cut over 200 employee positions," school board President Brian O'Neal said Thursday. "If we were not doing that, we would not be good stewards in representing the people who have elected us into our positions. We have to make difficult decisions, and unfortunately it's going to affect a lot of people."

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monkeymad wrote:

10% across the board salary cut for Teachers and Non Essentials.

25% across the board for BOD and administrators.

One year stop on all pension contributions. Instead funnel the money into financial markets in which the district keeps the interest money, and a year later if the economy shows a recovery the balance is deposited back into the pension fund.

Use Students to clean up the school. I mean really, how hard is it to throw out the trash can in a class room and run a vacuum or a mop at the end of the day.

My kids have chores at home that they started at age 5. Throwing out the kitchen garbage, sorting cans and bottles, cleaning there rooms, making the beds, cleaning the bathrooms, vacuuming,doing dishes, etc..

Let's face it, the entitlement mentality starts when kids are not taught civic responsibility.

12/12/2009 10:00 AM PST

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oldschool75 wrote:

More info. they r taking 1.7 million that was earned by Anaheim Adult. The district is using that money to help balance their budget. Thanks to arnold they are allowed to do it now where before it was strictly intended for the adult progam. How about giving the money back to the taxpayers since the money is not being used for what it was intended for.

12/11/2009 11:16 AM PST

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unitedadulted wrote:

THANK YOU THEHOPPER AND OLDSCHOOL75! We need more unity like this. We are fighting for the STUDENTS! The parents need to rise up and protest to the District... Save Adult Ed! Save Alternative Ed... !

12/11/2009 11:07 AM PST

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oldschool75 wrote:

Anaheim will see an increase of crime and tagging because these students will have nowhere to go if they close their Adult Ed. program. Neither the superintendent nor the board members care because they live on the good side of the city.

Why are the superintendents making over \$145,000? Why don't they take a pay cut? The COMMUNITY needs to wake up and ask why does Anaheim Union have so many district employees making over \$100,000 if not more? The teachers have received a pay increase of over 16% over three years. I wish my employer would give me a raise like that. This district needs to make cuts from the top not just from the bottom! I suggest the people making over a \$100,000 take a minimum 15% pay cut.

And I agree that no more bonds should be passed anymore by the tax payers. Remember the last bond where millions of dollars were unaccounted for and the D.A.'s office had to investigate. How about when the district started charging youth leagues thousands of dollars to use the fields. More and more money is all they want. The PEOPLE need to speak up and stop being taken advantage of. CHANGE is needed at the next board election.

12/11/2009 11:00 AM PST

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thehopper wrote:

I totally agree with saving adult ed and furthermore save those jobs that could be lost of staffing, I do not want to see my kids go to school in dirty classrooms and dirty restrooms, i have seen the buildings at the district offices and they are so clean they would not cut those custodians at all.

I would expect the top Superintendent to show some valor and be the very first to accept a 15% pay cut from his total package of 300,000 salary and benefits. Those benefits should be for our future in education, yes, you negotiated with a board for that huge package, but that boards sucks up to him as they did last night because a few of them are not representing us in whole or part.

Changes will be made in my area of Cypress on the next board election.

By the way readers, don't be fooled, Vote No on any school attempts to get LOANS, EDUCATION should be FIRST, then everything else.

God bless

The hopper assitance league.

12/11/2009 10:42 AM PST

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unitedadulted wrote:

take a 50% cut in salary. If they want to send a message that they are "down" with their staff and students, that will certainly help.

The AUHSD is the third largest employer in the City of Anaheim... third largest... yet, a set-back of \$1.7 million

- ☐ Yes, they can be dangerous and costly
- ☐ No, they're part of local beach culture
- ☐ Not sure

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